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Chapter 1

Spottedpaw was out of the apprentice den, sunlight pouring on her tortoiseshell fur. She sighed. "It's such a beautiful day like always." she thought, purring.

Spottedpaw saw Thistleclaw walk into camp with Tigerpaw, obviously coming back from training. Thistleclaw padded to Spottedpaw.

"Hey." Thistleclaw purred. Spottedpaw purred back as she licked his cheek.

"So, what's up?" Spottedpaw mewed. Thistleclaw looked around the camp. "I want to show you something." he mewed. Excitement rushed beneath Spottedpaw's pelt.

Thistleclaw padded to the apprentice den, flicking his tail at Spottedpaw, motioning her to follow.

She followed him in the apprentice den. She laid down in her nest.

"Now close your eyes and sleep. You'll see a dark forest." Thistleclaw mewed.

Spottedpaw did as she was told and closed her eyes. She woke up in a dream and saw she was standing in a dark forest. She felt warm fur beside her.

"Isn't it great here?" Thistleclaw purred. Spottedpaw nodded, looking around the forest in awe.

"The rest of the cats think it's ugly." Thistleclaw growled. Spottedpaw looked at him. "I don't think it's ugly. I actually think it's very beautiful." Spottedpaw purred.

Thistleclaw smiled at her. "I knew you'd like it here." he purred. "Hey, do you, by any chance, want to train here or something? I know really great battle moves!" Thistleclaw mewed.

Spottedpaw thought for a moment. Her mentor was Thrushpelt, but all he does seem to do is stare at Bluefur and not train Spottedpaw.

Spottedpaw nodded. "I'd love to train here with you!" she purred. She saw happiness in Thistleclaw's eyes as he pressed against her and twined his tail with hers.

Chapter 2

Spottedpaw came back from hunting with Thrushpelt.

"Took him long enough. How long was it? I dunno, 2 moons?" Spottedpaw thought bitterly as she put her catch on the fresh kill pile.

"Are we gonna train tomorrow?" Spottedpaw mewed.

"Sorry, no. I'm...busy." Thrushpelt mewed.

Annoyance crept under Spottedpaw's beautiful tortoiseshell pelt. "Oh yes! You must be so busy staring at Bluefur all day and not even share one praise with your apprentice!" Spottedpaw growled. She stomped away before Thrushpelt could say anything.

She plopped on the ground and started ripping the grass in anger. "I hope crows feed on him!" Spottedpaw thought angrily.

Spottedpaw felt a soft tail and looked up, immediately relieved to see Thistleclaw.

"Hey. I saw what happened back there. Are you okay?" Thistleclaw mewed.

"I would be if my mentor wasn't such a flea bag!" Spottedpaw growled.

"I'll make it up to you. Why don't you practice fighting moves with Whitepaw today? That'll keep you distracted, as well as I want to see if your training in the Dark Forest is paying off." Thistleclaw purred.

"I'd love that. Thank you." Spottedpaw purred, her anger evaporating. Thistleclaw purred and pressed his muzzle to her cheek.

Later that day, Thistleclaw, Spottedpaw and Whitepaw were in the forest. They were going to practice.

"Now remember the moves I taught you." Thistleclaw whispered to Spottedpaw. She nodded.

"Alright. You may begin." Thistleclaw mewed to the two apprentices.

They crouched and circled around each other. "You're going down!" Spottedpaw thought. She started to hiss. She saw Whitepaw bristle a little. "Wimp." she thought.

She suddenly charged at him and threw herself at him, digging her claws into his back. Spottedpaw enjoyed hearing Whitepaw's yowl of pain.

She regained balance and dug her claws in his white pelt as she threw him to a tree. "Ow!" Whitepaw yelped.

But Spottedpaw didn't stop. She charged at him again and raked his belly. Whitepaw yowled with agony.

"That's enough." Thistleclaw mewed calmly to the apprentices. Spottedpaw did as she was told and sat down, panting.

"What was all that?! That wasn't fair!" Whitepaw whined.

"There's no such thing as a fair battle, and as my son, I expected you to realize that. But looks like you still have a lot of learning to do." Thistleclaw growled.

Thistleclaw looked over to Spottedpaw with warm amber eyes. "You did a great job. You're going to be a wonderful warrior." Thistleclaw purred. Spottedpaw puffed out her chest with pride from his praise.

"How are you praising her for this? She looked like she wanted to kill me!" Whitepaw growled.

"That's enough Whitepaw." Thistleclaw hissed.

"No! I'm tired of you treating me like fox dung!" Whitepaw growled.

Thistleclaw pounced on his son and pinned him. "You don't dare to say that to your father." Thistleclaw growled.

"A father would never attack their own son!" Whitepaw hissed.

"You know what, Whitepaw? There were many times that I wished I haven't fallen in love with your mother! Many times I wished I wasn't her mate! Many times I wished she wasn't dead! And many times I wished you weren't my son!" Thistleclaw growled.

Whitepaw stared at his father, tears in his yellow eyes. "W-what?" Whitepaw mewed.

"Get out of here." Thistleclaw growled. "Before I kill you."

Thistleclaw released his grip. Whitepaw stared at his father for a moment. Then he ran, crying.

Thistleclaw snorted and turned to Spottedpaw. "Sorry about that. I wished that little fox dung wasn't born. But at least I got you." Thistleclaw mewed before pressing against her.

Spottedpaw stared into the direction Whitepaw ran. But she

didn't feel pity. She actually felt amused. "He's weak." she thought.

Chapter 3

"Faster!" Thistleclaw ordered. Spottedpaw did as she was told and sprinted faster to the tree and raked the bark. Spottedpaw licked the bits of bark off her claws and paw.

"Well done. You're improving a lot during these past moons." Thistleclaw purred.

Spottedpaw purred from his praise. "I wish you were my mentor instead of that flea bag." Spottedpaw mewed.

Thistleclaw padded to her side and pressed against her.

"Yeah, well, I wish you were..." Thistleclaw started to mew, his new trailing off.

"I was what?" Spottedpaw mewed.

Thistleclaw started to purr. He looked into her amber eyes with love and warmth.

"I wish you were my mate." he purred.

Spottedpaw stared at him for a moment. Her gaze softened as she pressed her cheek to his.

"I wish we were mates, too." she purred.

She heard a deep purr rumble in Thistleclaw's throat as he pressed his muzzle to her head.

Thistleclaw and Spottedpaw woke up. They padded outside and saw the nursery was full of cats.

"Did a queen kit?" Spottedpaw mewed.

Thistleclaw shrugged. "Let's go find out." he mewed as they padded into the nursery.

Inside the nursery, they saw Bluefur with her tail curled around three kits.

"Bluefur kitted? Is Thrushpelt the father?" Spottedpaw mewed.

Bluefur looked up at Spottedpaw and glanced at Thrushpelt.

"Uh, yeah. Sure." Bluefur mewed before licking her kits.

Spottedpaw looked over to Thrushpelt and saw affection, but also sadness in his green eyes. He padded out of the nursery, his tail low.

"What was that about?" Spottedpaw thought. She looked back at Bluefur's kits.

One kit was a gray tom, so was the gray she-kit beside him. The last one was a white she-kit with gray patches.

Bluefur pointed her nose to the gray tom. "Stonekit." she mewed. She moved her muzzle to the gray she-kit. "Mistykit." she mewed. She moved her nose the the gray patched she-kit. "Mosskit." she mewed before licking them again.

Spottedpaw stared at Bluefur's kits. "I wonder when I'll have kits with Thistleclaw..." Spottedpaw thought, purring at the idea of seeing Spottedpaw's and Thistleclaw's newborn kits squirming around her belly.

"I can't wait to have kits with him." she thought, purring.

Chapter 4

A few days later, Spottedpaw and Thistleclaw were back in camp from a hunting patrol. They saw Tawnyspots, the deputy, pass by them, along with a huge cough.

Spottedpaw wasn't concerned for him. "He's going to die any day now, and when he does, Thistleclaw is going to be made deputy!" Spottedpaw thought.

Spottedpaw and Thistleclaw dumped their prey into the fresh kill pile. They padded to the clearing and laid down, sharing tongues.

It was moon-fall and Thistleclaw and Spottedpaw were curled around each other in the clearing.

Suddenly there was a yowl from the nursery as Spottedpaw and Thistleclaw woke up in alarm.

"What was that? Is someone kitting?" Spottedpaw thought.

Bluefur suddenly charged out of the nursery as half the clan started to wake up.

"They're gone! My kits are gone!" Bluefur yowled.

Everyone murmured in alarm. Spottedpaw rushed into the nursery and saw a hole in the wall.

"What in Starclan?" Spottedpaw thought.

"Search the camp for Bluefur's kits!" Spottedpaw heard Sunstar order.

They looked everywhere. They even looked outside to camp to see if they sneaked out of camp.

"I'm so sorry, Bluefur. But we looked everywhere. I think a badger might've taken them." Sunstar mewed, running his tail down Bluefur's spine.

Spottedpaw actually felt pity for once for Bluefur. She looked into Bluefur's eyes. She saw Bluefur glance towards Thrushpelt, who nodded to her.

Spottedpaw tilted her head. "What the..." she thought.

Spottedpaw saw pity in Sunstar's amber eyes. He glanced at Tawnyspots. Tawnyspots dipped his head to him.

Spottedpaw wondered what thoughts the two toms were sharing. The two toms both looked at Bluefur. That's when something snapped in Spottedpaw.

"Thistleclaw won't be made deputy, will he? Sunstar is going to choose Bluefur as his deputy, won't he?" Spottedpaw thought. She sighed.

Chapter 5

The Clan huddled around Tawnyspots's dead body. They were sharing tongues with him one last time.
Spottedpaw smiled a little. "Finally. That coughing flea bag has gone. We are now rid of him and his sickness." Spottedpaw thought.
She saw Sunstar leap onto the Highrock. He didn't need to call the meeting, for everyone was here after hearing the death of Tawnyspots.
"Tawnyspots was an honourable and loyal deputy. It makes me feel more sad for him because he was dying for days, making him suffer for a long time. But I'm glad he's in Starclan now, free from his pain and sickness." Sunstar mewed, hanging his head to his old comrade.
The Clan stood silent for a few moments. But Spottedpaw rolled her amber eyes. "Good riddance. He was only a normal deputy. Why are they making such a big deal out of his death?" she thought.
"And now it's time to announce the new deputy." Sunstar mewed.
Spottedpaw glanced over to Thistleclaw.
"Please make him deputy." she thought.
"I say these words before the body of Tawnyspots, so his spirit may hear and approve my choice." Sunstar mewed, looking up at the sky.
"Please." Spottedpaw thought.
Sunstar paused for a moment.
"Bluefur will be the new Thunderclan deputy!" Sunstar mewed.
Spottedpaw bristled. "No." she thought. She looked over to Bluefur, who was looking at Sunstar with warmth in her blue eyes as she padded onto the Highrock. "No! She can't be deputy! Thistleclaw should be deputy!" Spottedpaw thought.
"Thank you, Sunstar, for choosing me as deputy. I promise to lead this Clan with the same courage as Tawnyspots did." Bluefur mewed, dipping her head to the Thunderclan leader with pride in her eyes.
Spottedpaw swallowed a growl. "Lies! Thistleclaw should have been a better choice! He would've been a better deputy than you!" Spottedpaw thought.
Spottedpaw looked over to Thistleclaw, who's head was hung, eyes

shut angrily. She padded over to him and ran her tail down his spine. "I'm sorry that you weren't made deputy. You would have been a better deputy for sure." Spottedpaw mewed gently to him as she pressed against him.
He ignored her and pulled away. Spottedpaw felt hurt. "Your comfort doesn't make me feel better. Stop trying to act like everything's okay." Thistleclaw growled at her.
Thistleclaw's words stung Spottedpaw like thorns. "I-I know, but..." Spottedpaw started to mew.
She shut her mouth as he shot her an angry look. Spottedpaw winced from his gaze as though her muzzle was clawed.
"Oh. I see. Comforting me because you think we'll be future mates, huh? Well guess what? I said I WOULD have been your mate, not that I WANT to!" Thistleclaw hissed.
Spottedpaw stared at him, her amber eyes full of hurt and tears. "But...I thought..." she mewed.
"You thought wrong!" Thistleclaw growled before stomping away out of camp.
Spottedpaw started sobbing as she ran into the apprentice den and curled up, ignoring her Clanmates on congratulating Bluefur. She tuned out the world as darkness infolded her, eventually giving her in to sleep.

Chapter 6

Spottedpaw was eating a squirrel beside her brother, Redpaw.

Spottedpaw looked over to Thistleclaw, who quickly looked away. Spottedpaw padded up to him, but he stood up and padded away to another spot.

Spottedpaw felt sorrow rushing beneath her tortoiseshell fur. She sighed and padded back to her brother.

"Is everything alright between you and Thistleclaw?" Redpaw asked.

Spottedpaw looked at her brother. "I...I, uh...I don't want to talk about it." Spottedpaw mewed before eating her squirrel. Redpaw opened his mouth to ask another question, but Spottedpaw felt relief as he shut his mouth and went back to eating.

Spottedpaw went hunting with her brother later that day. Spottedpaw sniffed for prey, but scented Thistleclaw's scent.

"It's fresh. He might've came for a walk." she thought.

"Why don't we split up? We'll get more prey that way." Spottedpaw mewed.

Redpaw nodded and padded away. Spottedpaw followed Thistleclaw's scent trail as it led to Sunningrocks. She saw him laying in the sunshine on the rocks.

She ran to him. "Hey." she mewed.

Thistleclaw looked up at her, but started growling. "Oh. It's you. Come to have a little pep talk or something?" Thistleclaw growled.

Spottedpaw felt as though thorns pricked her pelt as she heard his words. "I was just wondering why we've been so distant. You don't train with me in the Dark Forest anymore, and we haven't shared one bite of prey with each other. Is it because you weren't named deputy?" Spottedpaw mewed

Thistleclaw gave her a harsh look. "Yes. There. Happy? Now will you leave me alone, you pest?" Thistleclaw hissed.

His words stuck Spottedpaw in the heart like a huge thorn.

"No! Not happy! I want things to be right between us! And just because you didn't get to be made deputy does not mean that we should all of a sudden break up!" Spottedpaw hissed.

"Break up? We were never together! I may have loved you then, but not anymore! So you may as well forget about our little relationship and get over it, sunshine!" Thistleclaw growled.

Spottedpaw stared at him with horrer. Tears built up in her amber eyes. She slashed his cheek and hissed. He tried to scratch her head, but she was too quick for him as she avoided his claws.

She dug her claws in his flank as she jumped on his back and nipped the back of his neck. He yowled and threw her off as she slammed to a tree.

Spottedpaw got up and ran at him and pushed him with brute force. She landed on him, seeing his belly exposed.

Thistleclaw stared at her with shock, realizing his belly was exposed.

Spottedpaw giggled. She moved her muzzle to his ear. "Sorry, darling, but your path ends here. Have fun in the Dark Forest." she whispered.

"Please, look. I'm sorry. I'll love you. You can be my mate. Just let me go." Thistleclaw begged.

Spottedpaw giggled again. "Well well well! Thistleclaw, the mighty warrior of Thunderclan begging for mercy! Who would've thought! I'm sorry, hun, but you don't deserve my heart anymore. Go rot in the Dark Forest, if you will, and wear loneliness like a crown." Spottedpaw purred.

"I'm sorry..." Thistleclaw whispered. But Spottedpaw ignored him and plunged her claws deep in his belly and raked it down to his legs. His organs spilled out as blood poured out of Thistleclaw's mouth.

Spottedpaw purred and licked the blood off her paw. "Sorry, sweetheart. A girl's gotta do what she's gotta do." she purred. She put Thistleclaw's body on her back and followed Redpaw's scent trail.

When she saw him, she ran to him and fell to the ground, pretending to cry. "R-Redpaw..." she choked.

Redpaw turned around and layed beside her. "What happened?" Redpaw mewed, eyes wide with shock.

"Th-there was a R-Riverclan patrol. Th-they attacked him, demanding him to get off of S-Sunningrocks. H-he tried to fight

back, b-but they were much stronger. Th-th-they killed him!" Spottedpaw lied.

"Oh, Spottedpaw, I'm so sorry." Redpaw mewed softly. "Come on. Let's carry him back to camp."

They both stood up, sharing the weight of Thistleclaw as they carried him back to camp.

Chapter 7

The Clan gathered around Thistleclaw's body, giving him silent vigil.
Spottedpaw padded up to his body and lied down. She laid her muzzle on his body. She didn't feel sadness, but joy.
Spottedpaw felt free from the burdens from her shoulders. She smirked a little.
"I must prevent from anyone finding out I killed him." she thought, her smile disappearing.
She stood up and padded to the medicine den. She saw Featherwhisker, the medicine cat, sort herbs.
"Featherwhisker?" Spottedpaw mewed gently. Featherwhisker turned around. He smiled. "Hi, Spottedpaw. What do you need?" he purred.
"Actually, it's not what I need. It's what YOU need." Spottedpaw mewed. Featherwhisker tilted his head in confusion.
"The fight with the Riverclan patrol. I...I just stood there and watched them kill Thistleclaw. There was nothing I could do to help. But I want to change that now before anyone gets hurt." Spottedpaw lied. Featherwhisker nodded, motioning her to continue.
"I...uh...want to be your apprentice." Spottedpaw mewed. Featherwhisker smiled kindly. "It's about time someone would be interested in healing! Of course you can be my apprentice!" he purred.
"Great! When do I start learning?" Spottedpaw mewed. "Tomorrow. You should get some rest. It must have been a long day for you. But first, tell Sunstar and Thrushpelt you're my new apprentice." Featherwhisker mewed.
Spottedpaw nodded and padded outside to Sunstar. He saw her walking up to him as he turned around. "Yes?" he mewed.
"I just wanna let you know I'm going to be Featherwhisker's apprentice." Spottedpaw mewed.
Sunstar smiled. "That's great!" he purred. But his smile quickly turned into a frown as he looked at Thistleclaw's body.
"Riverclan has gone too far this time. They have killed one of our

warriors, and if we do not take action, they will kill more of us." Sunstar growled.
Spottedpaw rolled her eyes. "Maybe you should talk about this to your deputy." she mewed bitterly.
Sunstar turned back to her. He chuckled. "Sorry. I ramble a lot. Anyway, you should go tell Thrushpelt about your new path." he mewed.
Spottedpaw nodded. "With pleasure." she mewed before padding to Thrushpelt.
"I'm going to be Featherwhisker's apprentice." Spottedpaw mewed.
"Uh-huh. Cool." he mewed, staring at Bluefur.
Annoyance sparked inside Spottedpaw. "That means I'm free of you. You're not my burden anymore." she growled.
"Nice." Thrushpelt mewed.
"And I killed Thistleclaw." she hissed.
"Fantastic."
Spottedpaw started to growl. "And I'm glad you're not my mentor anymore, because you were horrible! I'll pity the next apprentice you'll mentor!" Spottedpaw yowled. Thrushpelt turned his head to Spottedpaw with surprise.
"Wait, Spottedpaw, I'm sorry..." Thrushpelt mewed.
"'I'm sorry! I'm sorry'" Spottedpaw mocked Thrushpelt. "Your words mean nothing to me now, mouse-dung!" Spottedpaw hissed. She stomped away before he could say anything else.
She looked back to Trushpelt. She smirked. "Since I'm a medicine cat apprentice, I can kill whoever I want without anyone suspecting anything." she thought with an evil smile.

Chapter 8

Spottedpaw was outside the camp. Featherwhisker told her to gather some herbs. The herbs she gathered were in her mouth. She sniffed for a herb, but instead scented Thrushpelt's scent. She smiled. "A perfect opportunity to kill him." she thought.
She dropped her herbs in a hidden place and followed Thrushpelt's scent. She saw him hunting alone. "Perfect." she thought.
Spottedpaw padded up to him. "Hello, Trushpelt." she mewed.
Thrushpelt jumped a little and sighed with relief. "Oh. It's just you." he mewed.
Spottedpaw padded to his side and pressed against him. "I just wanted to apologize for what I said yesterday. I was angry because my very close friend has died, so I took my anger out on you." Spottedpaw mewed.
"No, you were right. I was a mouse-dung. I could not always get over the fact that Bluefur doesn't belong to me." he mewed. He rubbed his muzzle on her head. "I should be apologizing to you. Because, after all these moons, I was focused on my love for Bluefur..." he mewed. He pulled away and looked deep into Spottedpaw's eyes. "When my love should've been you."
"But I'm a medicine cat apprentice. You know I can't be mates with you." Spottedpaw mewed.
"It'll be our little secret." Thrushpelt purred. He pressed against her and twined tails with her.
Spottedpaw pretended to purr. She lapped his cheek. She put her paw on his chest. She sighed. "I'm sorry, Thrushpelt..." she whispered.
"What do you-" he started to mew. He got cut off as Spottedpaw jumped on him, exposing his belly.
"Your words still mean nothing to me. You valued me less than mouse-dung. It's too late to go lovey-dovey with me now. I will get my revenge." Spottedpaw purred.
"But you can't kill me! It's against the warrior code!" Thrushpelt mewed.
"Ha! Seems funny, because a minute ago, you asked me to be your mate, even though it's against the warrior code. How is this any

different?" Spottedpaw hissed.
"Because killing a cat is the most dishonourable thing a warrior could do!" he hissed.
"But I'm not a warrior, so I can kill whoever, whenever. Goodbye." Spottedpaw purred before she clawed his throat. His mouth started to gurgle from the blood.
Spottedpaw started licking her paw. She put him on her back and she padded to camp. She whipped up fake tears as she fell to the ground. Featherwhisker and Sunstar saw and ran up to her.
"Spottedpaw? What happened?" Featherwhisker mewed.
"Th-the Riverclan patrol showed up again. Th-they killed him. They had no reason to kill him, so they killed him for sport!" Spottedpaw lied.
She heard a growling deep inside Sunstar's throat. "They have is killed two of our warriors, one for Sunningrocks, and one for sport. Today, Riverclan has asked for a war. And they shall get one!" Sunstar growled.

Chapter 9

The clearing was littered with injured cats. Sunstar was in the medicine den. He was struggling for breath. Spottedpaw knew he was on his last life. "And if he does, that blue-furred dung will be leader." she thought, growling under her breath as she applied spiderwebs to his wounds.

It's been two moons since Spottedpaw killed Thrushpelt and Sunstar declared war on Riverclan. Featherwhisker padded into the medicine den. "Sunstar's going to be alright, right?" Spottedpaw mewed.

Featherwhisker shrugged. "Well, we all have to go sometime. But we'll do what we can to heal him." Featherwhisker mewed. Spottedpaw mewed.

Spottedpaw turned her head to Sunstar. "Are you alright, Sunstar?" Spottedpaw mewed. Sunstar seemed barely awake, but he looked up to Spottedpaw and sighed. "I don't think I can make it. I'm slipping away." Sunstar rasped.

"Not on my watch." Spottedpaw mewed. She got poppy seeds. "Here. These will ease your pain while we tend to your wounds. It will also help you sleep." Spottedpaw mewed.

Sunstar licked the poppy seeds and yawned. Featherwhisker padded up to her. "You're doing great. Just as I'd expect from my apprentice." Featherwhisker purred.

Spottedpaw smiled at him. "Y'know, I'm starting to get tired of calling you Spottedpaw." he mewed.

Spottedpaw stared at him. Featherwhisker purred. "I think it's time for you to be a full medicine cat." Featherwhisker mewed.

Spottedpaw's amber eyes sparkled. "Really?" she mewed. "Of course! You heal cats very well, even without my supervision." he purred.

Spottedpaw looked at him gratefully and licked his cheek. Spottedpaw looked back at Sunstar. He was squirming around and groaning. Spottedpaw bristled. "Something's wrong!" she thought.

"Sunstar? What is it? Where does it hurt?" Spottedpaw mewed. Sunstar didn't seem to hear her. He was staring at the roof of the den. "Starclan...they're calling me..." he whispered. He gasped

and went limp.

Spottedpaw stared in shock. She put her paw on his throat. She felt no pulse. "He's...dead..." she mewed. She felt Featherwhisker's soft tail running down her back. "No. Now Bluefur is going to be leader!" Spottedpaw thought.

Chapter 10

Spottedpaw was sorting herbs in the medicine den, grief for Sunstar stinging her heart. She sighed with sadness.

She padded outside and saw Featherwhisker and Bluefur come back to camp as Bluefur padded to the Highrock.

"Let cats old enough to catch their own prey gather beneath the Highrock for a Clan meeting!" Bluefur yowled.

Spottedpaw's sadness instantly evaporated and was replaced with annoyance. "Great. Bluefur's leader now." she thought as she padded beneath the Highrock beside her brother Redtail, who was made a warrior a moon ago.

"Before anyone asks, yes, I have received my nine lives. I'm Bluestar now." Bluestar yowled to the Clan, fluffing her chest with pride.

"Bluestar! Bluestar! Bluestar!" the Clan started chanting her name, except Spottedpaw. She was growling under her breath. "She doesn't deserve this. This mouse-dung shouldn't lead our Clan!" Spottedpaw thought angrily.

Bluestar raised her tail for silence as the Clan stopped chanting. "Now, we need we need a deputy." Bluestar yowled.

Spottedpaw bristled with excitement as Bluestar looked at the sky. "I say these words before the body of Sunstar, so his spirit may hear and approve my choice." she mewed.

Spottedpaw flexed her claws impatiently. "Come on! Just get on with it!" she muttered through gritted teeth.

Bluestar looked down at Redtail with a smile. "Redtail will be the new deputy of Thunderclan!" Bluestar purred.

Spottedpaw smiled at her brother as he padded to the Highrock and licked Bluestar's shoulder gratefully.

"Redtail! Redtail! Redtail!" the Clan chanted his name. Spottedpaw was the loudest. Redtail gave his sister a look of affection. Spottedpaw returned the look of affection to him. "I'm proud of you." Spottedpaw thought, purring.

Chapter 11

It was a half moon later as Featherwhisker and Spottedpaw reached to Mothermouth.

As they both padded in, Spottedpaw felt cold air strike against her fur as she shivered. Featherwhisker pressed against her.

"Here. I'll keep you warm." Featherwhisker mewed. "Thanks." Spottedpaw mewed gratefully, starting to feel warmer. "Anytime." Featherwhisker purred.

Spottedpaw squinted as she tried to look up ahead. Everything was black and the only thing that could lead them the way was the echo of the two medicine cat's breathing.

Suddenly, a sharp light pierced Spottedpaw's amber eyes as she shut her eyes and slowly opened them. She saw a bright stone in the middle of the cave.

"Moonstone." she thought. She heard Featherwhisker purr. "Pretty, isn't it?" he purred.

"Yeah." Spottedpaw mewed, staring at the stone in awe.

Featherwhisker looked around the cave. "None of the other medicine cats are here. We must be the first ones here. We'll have to wait for the others." Featherwhisker mewed.

Spottedpaw nodded and sat down as she started to wait. She flicked her ear as she heard paw steps and breathing as she saw a brown tom and a white she-cat with black spots pad in.

"Hello, Featherwhisker!" purred the black-spotted she-cat. She saw Spottedpaw. "What's this? Is this your apprentice, Featherwhisker?" she mewed, her blue eyes filled with curiosity.

"Yes. Her name is Spottedpaw." Featherwhisker nodded. "Spottedpaw, this is Brambleberry and Mudfur." Featherwhisker mewed.

"Hello, Spottedpaw! It's very nice to meet you! And my my my, what a pretty she-cat you are!" Brambleberry purred.

Spottedpaw couldn't stifle her purr. "Thanks! You're really nice!" Spottedpaw mewed. Brambleberry giggled. "So I've been told." she purred.

Then a gray tom with white patches and a dark gray she-cat walked in. Spottedpaw started to purr at the white-patched tom,

but stopped as she saw snot on his nose and bristled.

The tom chuckled. "I always get that reaction. That's why my name's Runningnose." he purred.

"Oh, I'm so sorry!" Spottedpaw mewed. "My name is Spottedpaw. I'm Featherwhisker's apprentice."

"That's okay, and nice to meet you!" Runningnose purred. "Yeah, yeah. So you've meet a pretty little she-cat. Big deal." growled the dark-gray she-cat.

Spottedpaw bristled. To her surprise, Runningnose chuckled. "Don't worry about Yellowfang. She's always a grump!" he purred as he looked at his mentor playfully. Yellowfang purred with amusement. "Gee. Thanks." she purred.

Then a brown tabby tom walked in. "Hi! My name is Spottedpaw!" she mewed. The brown tom looked at her with surprise. "Oh, hi! You must be Featherwhisker's apprentice! My name is Barkface, the Windclan medicine cat." he mewed, dipping his head to Spottedpaw.

"Yes, yes, yes. Now can we get on with the ceremony? We're wasting moonlight over an apprentice!" Yellowfang snapped before padding to the Moonstone.

"Alright, Yellowfang, but first, I have to name my apprentice." Featherwhisker mewed. Yellowfang grunted with annoyance. "Fine. But make it snappy. We don't have all night." Yellowfang growled.

"Is she always this grumpy?" Spottedpaw asked Featherwhisker. Featherwhisker rolled his yellow eyes and purred with amusement. "Yes." he purred before padding to the Moonstone.

"I, Featherwhisker, medicine cat of Thunderclan, call upon my warrior ancestors to look down on this apprentice. She knows the ways of the medicine cat code as I commend her into a full medicine cat." Featherwhisker mewed.

He looked at Spottedpaw. "Spottedpaw, do you promise to uphold the medicine cat code and to not have a mate or kits?" Featherwhisker mewed.

Spottedpaw's pelt sparked with excitement. "I do." she mewed.

"Then by the powers of Starclan, I grant you your medicine cat name. Spottedpaw, from this day forward, you shall be known as Spottedleaf. Thunderclan honours your eagerness to learn and your ambition to become a full medicine cat."

Spottedleaf looked at Featherwhisker gratefully and licked his

shoulder. "Spottedleaf! Spottedleaf! Spottedleaf!" the medicine cats chanting, including Yellowfang. Spottedleaf puffed her chest out in pride.

"Alright, NOW can we get on with the ceremony?" Yellowfang snapped.

Featherwhisker purred. "Yes, we can, Yellowfang." he purred as all the medicine cats gathered around the Moonstone. "Finally." Spottedleaf heard Yellowfang mutter.

Spottedleaf pressed her nose to the stone as darkness infolded her. She opened her eyes in her dream and saw a land of light with vibrant trees.

"Starclan! I'm here!" Spottedleaf thought. "Yes, you are indeed here." Spottedleaf heard a voice.

She spun around and saw an old gray speckled tom with blue eyes. "Who are you?" Spottedleaf asked.

"I'm Goosefeather, the mentor of Featherwhisker. It's a pleasure to meet you." he mewed, dipping his head to her. "It would've been more of a pleasure if I wasn't talking to a killer and a lier!" he snapped suddenly.

Spottedleaf bristled. "I-I can explain..." Spottedleaf started to mew.

"You don't need to explain anything to me! You killed two Clanmates and lied about them being killed by Riverclan just because they didn't learn to like you!" Goosefeather growled.

"Well, that is true, but Thistleclaw was evil! He was training in the Dark Forest!" Spottedleaf mewed.

"Weren't you training with him?" Goosefeather growled.

"Yes, but he manipulated me! As well as, Thrushpelt was going to be my mate! It's against the warrior code to be mates with a medicine cat! I had to stop him before I could break TWO rules!" Spottedleaf mewed.

"I understand, but killing is against the warrior code. Wether you are a medicine cat or a warrior, it's against the code to kill. And when breaking the warrior code comes, a great punishment will follow." Goosefeather mewed.

"Please! I swear I won't kill another cat again! I swear!" Spottedleaf begged.

Goosefeather looked away. "You won't kill a cat. But you will do something worse than kill a cat. I have foreseen it." Goosefeather mewed.

Spottedleaf stared at him. "What will I do that's worse than death?!" Spottedleaf demanded.

"I will say nothing more." Goosefeather mewed.

"Please tell me! Tell me so I can avoid that future!" Spottedleaf yowled.

"Whatever destiny has been planned for you will hold. You can't change the future no matter what, nor can I tell you what will happen. That is my own personal business." Goosefeather hissed.

"Please! I'm begging you!" Spottedleaf yowled.

Goosefeather didn't answer and he started to pad away. "Please!" Spottedleaf begged as a huge flash came and woke up Spottedleaf.

The other medicine cats woke up. Featherwhisker looked at her. "So, did you see Starclan? Was it great?" Featherwhisker purred.

Spottedleaf nodded, too shocked to speak as she stood up and padded out of the cave.

Chapter 12

It's been 1 moon since she talked to Goosefeather. And it's been a half moon since Featherwhisker died of greencough. Spottedleaf tried to save him, but she knew that no cat could cure greencough.

Spottedleaf was tending to Mousefur's wounds as she put a spider web on her leg. She looked outside the den and saw Bluestar staring at the sky.

Spottedleaf sighed. "What is she thinking about NOW?" Spottedleaf thought with annoyance as she padded up to Bluestar.

"How's Mousefur?" Bluestar mewed. "Her wounds are deep, but she's young and fresh from apprenticeship. She'll recover from her wounds." Spottedleaf mewed. "She's not going to die from a bleeding leg, mouse-brain." Spottedleaf thought with annoyance.

Bluestar sighed with relief. "You are a gifted medicine cat. The Clan is lucky to have you." Bluestar mewed. She looked up at the sky. "Tonight's defeat has deeply troubled me. We haven't lost battles like this since I became leader." Bluestar mewed.

"Maybe. Are you finding answers from Starclan?" Spottedleaf asked. Bluestar nodded. "At times like these, I need the advice of our ancestors. Have you received any prophecy yet?" Bluestar mewed.

Spottedleaf was about to tell Bluestar about her talk with Goosefeather, but she sworn to herself that she must keep it as a secret. So Spottedleaf shook her head. "Not for some time, Bluestar." she mewed.

Suddenly, something pierced in her mind as she looked at a shooting star. She saw the flames of the shooting star and an outline of an orange tabby tom. "Fire alone will save our Clan..." the words echoed in her mind.

Spottedleaf looked at Bluestar and saw her with a look of curiosity. "Are you okay?" Bluestar mewed. Spottedleaf nodded. "It was a prophecy sent by Starclan." Spottedleaf mewed.

Bluestar stared at her more urgently. "What was the prophecy?" she mewed in a serious voice.

Spottedleaf stared at her for a moment before looking at

the stars. "Fire alone can save our Clan." she mewed.

"Fire? But the Clans fear fire? How can something so furious save us from blood and claws?" Bluestar mewed.

"I don't know. But that was what Starclan sent me." Spottedleaf mewed.

Bluestar stared at her for a moment, then sighed. "You are never wrong. If it was a sign from Starclan, then I believe it. Fire will save us all." Bluestar mewed before looking at the stars.

"Fire alone can save our Clan..." the prophecy echoed in Spottedleaf's mind. "What could the prophecy mean?" she thought.

Chapter 13

Spottedleaf was in her demand sorting herbs, as usual. "I'm starting to run low on spider webs. I should probably go hunt for herbs today." Spottedleaf thought.

She suddenly heard whispers outside her den. She padded outside, wondering what they were whispering about as she saw Whitestorm and Lionheart come in camp. She saw another tom with them. He was an orange, flame tabby tom with green eyes.

"Fire alone can save our Clan..." the prophecy echoed in Spottedleaf's mind. Before she could wonder what the prophecy meant, the orange tabby looked at her. Spottedleaf stared at him. They're eyes met as they kept staring at each other.

"Bluestar!" Lionheart called to Bluestar. The gaze of Spottedleaf and the orange tabby broke as they looked at the Highrock and saw Bluestar.

"So? Has he decided to join our Clan?" Bluestar mewed. "Yes." Lionheart mewed.

Spottedleaf tilted her head. Was Bluestar part of this?

"Wonderful. Come up on the Highrock, little one." Bluestar purred. The orange tabby looked alarmed at first as he leaped onto the Highrock with Lionheart beside him.

Bluestar didn't need to call the meeting, for everyone was here. "Today, we have found this kit and he decided to join our Clan." Bluestar yowled to the Clan.

"Look! He has a collar! He's a kittypet!" someone spat. All heads turned to Darkstripe. "We can't trust a kittypet to join our Clan! Once a kittypet, always a kittypet!" he mewed.

For some reason, Spottedleaf felt angry from his words. "Shut up, mouse heart!" she thought. She looked at the Highrock. She scented the stench of fear from the orange tabby as his green eyes were filled with alarm. Lionheart whispered something to him.

Longtail padded out from the crowd. "That thing on his collar will make noise to attract his Twolegs and doom us all!" Longtail taunted. Lionheart yet again whispered something in the orange tabby's ear. The orange tabby still looked frightened for a

moment, but it disappeared as he had an angry look on his face and jumped down to Longtail.

Longtail growled and tried to nip his neck, but the orange tom was faster as he nipped his ear and toor off skin with it. Longtail yowled with agony. "That's it!" he yowled as he jumped on the orange kit.

He grabbed his collar from behind and pulled in. The orange tabby grabbed the soil, fighting for air. "No!" thought Spottedleaf.

Suddenly, the collar ripped in two as both toms fell to the ground. The orange tabby gasped for air. Bluestar leaped down from the Highrock.

"This kittypet is now free from his collar. It's a sign from Starclan! We have they're approval to make this kittypet a member of Thunderclan!" Bluestar yowled.

Spottedleaf sighed with relief. "Thank you, Starclan." she whispered.

The orange tom and Bluestar leaped onto the Highrock. "Cats of the Clan! Do we ALL approve on making this kittypet an apprentice?" Bluestar yowled, glancing at Darkstripe and Longtail. They both sighed and nodded.

"Good." she mewed. She looked at the orange tom. Sunlight poured onto his pelt as his pelt shined orange, making the grass orange. "You look like blazing fire in the sunlight. From this day on, you shall be known as Firepaw. Starclan will honour your courage yet to come." Bluestar mewed.

Firepaw fluffed his chest out with pride as the Clan started to chant his name, including Spottedleaf, discluding Longtail and Darkstripe.

The ceremony was done as both cats leaped off the Highrock. Cats crowded around Firepaw to congratulate him. Spottedleaf saw Graypaw talking to Firepaw. They both glanced at Darkstripe as Graupaw whispered in his ear and Firepaw nodded.

Spottedleaf's heart leaped as Firepaw looked at her and said something. Graypaw smiled and said something back. Spottedleaf smiled, not knowing why she's smiling. "Great Starclan, what is wrong with me?" she thought.

Suddenly, Ravenpaw burst into camp and leaped onto the Highrock, covered in blood and out of breath.

"Ravenpaw? What happened?" Bluestar mewed.

Ravenpaw panted and winced. "Speak!" Bluestar demanded.

Ravenpaw bristled, but opened his mouth. "R-Redtail's d-d-dead!" he yowled.

Chapter 14

Spottedleaf bristled. "No." she thought. She saw Tigerclaw pad in, with Redtail's limp body hanging from his jaws. "No!" Spottedleaf yowled. As Tigerclaw put down his body, Spottedleaf ran to him and buried her nose into her brother's soft, still-warm fur.

"He was murdered by Oakheart in the battle. I had to choice but to avenge him as I took Oakheart's life." Tigerclaw mewed.

Spottedleaf looked over to Bluestar and saw sadness in her eyes as soon as Tigerclaw mentioned Oakheart's death.

Spottedleaf looked over to Sandpaw and saw tears in her green eyes. She was beside her mother, Brindleface. Brindleface stared down at her mate's body with tears in her eyes.

Runningwind ran to his body and buried his face in Redtail's fur, yowling with grief.

Spottedleaf stared at her brother. Was this the great punishment Goosefeather was talking about?

Spottedleaf heard Bluestar sigh with grief as she leaped onto the Highrock. "Cats of the Clans. You may know that Redtail is dead." Bluestar mewed with sadness.

Whispers and murmurs were passed along the Clan. "Who will be deputy now?" yowled Darkstripe.

Bluestar hesitated for a moment. "I'll think about it." Bluestar mewed before padding into her den.

Spottedleaf padded into her den and gathered the herbs that will send him to Starclan. She padded out and put the herbs on his body.

"Rest well in Starclan, dear brother. May you find good prey and shelter while you sleep." Spottedleaf choked.

"I didn't know I had to do this to my own brother." Spottedleaf thought with grief.

She saw Firepaw pad up to her. "What're you doing?" Firepaw mewed, eyes filled with curiosity, but his voice was filled with pity.

"I'm sending him to Starclan." Spottedleaf mewed softly. "What's Starclan?" he mewed. "It's the warrior spirits. It's where

almost everyone goes when they die. You will see them in the group of stars called Silverpelt. There will be a star added to them tonight." Spottedleaf mewed.

Spottedleaf felt his tail run down her spine. "What was he to you?" he mewed. "He was my brother." she mewed. Firepaw paused for a moment. "I'm so sorry." he mewed. "It's alright. I'll see him again one day." she mewed softly.

Before she could continue to mourn for Redtail, Bluestar came out of her den. "Let cats old enough to catch their own prey gather beneath the Highrock for a Clan meeting!" Bluestar yowled.

Everyone trudged beneath the Highrock as Bluestar continued. "I have made my choice who's going to be the next deputy." Bluestar yowled.

Everyone glanced at each other, as they also glanced at Tigerclaw, obviously wondering if he will be the next deputy.

"But first, let us have a moment of silence for Redtail. He was an honourable deputy and a good friend. He will be missed." Bluestar mewed. Everyone hung their heads as they went silent.

"Now. It's time to name Thunderclan's new deputy." Bluestar broke the silence. "I say these words before the body of Redtail, so his spirit may hear and approve my choice."

Spottedleaf's heart thudded as everyone looked to Tigerclaw. Will he be the next deputy?

"Lionheart will be the new Thunderclan deputy!" Bluestar yowled.

Everyone stared at her with surprise. Even Lionheart looked surprised as he leaped onto the Highrock.

"Thank you, Bluestar. I'll lead the Clan with the same eagerness and courage as Redtail did." Lionheart mewed.

Spottedleaf looked over to Tigerclaw and saw a look of disappointment. "I don't blame him. Everyone thought he was going to be deputy!" Spottedleaf thought.

"Now we will spend the rest of the night grieving for our former deputy." Bluestar mewed. She and Lionheart leaped down the Highrock as they padded to Redtail's body.

Spottedleaf closed her eyes and buried her nose in his fur. She opened one eye and saw Sandpaw walk away. Spottedleaf understood why. "She can't bear the thought to grieve her own father. It's alright if she doesn't mourn him tonight." Spottedleaf mewed. She closed her eyes again. "Goodbye, brother. I will meet

you again one day." she whispered as she drifted off to sleep.

Chapter 15

Spottedleaf was in her den mixing the poultice that Firepaw asked her to make for Yellowfang, who surprisingly joined Thunderclan a moon ago.

Firepaw padded into the den. "Are you done with the poultice, Spottedleaf?" he asked. "Yep! Here you go!" Spottedleaf mewed, handing him the poultice. He sniffed it. "Blech!" he mewed. Spottedleaf purred with amusement. The two have grown close since Firepaw joined the Clan.

"Why does it smell so horrible?" Firepaw hissed. "It's so the ticks can get off Yellowfang." Spottedleaf mewed. "Y'know, Firepaw, you're doing a great job with Yellowfang." Spottedleaf purred as she pressed against him. She drank in his scent.

"Thanks." purred Firepaw. Spottedleaf purred back and started licking his head. "Spottedleaf. I want to tell you..." Firepaw started to say.

"Where's that poultice, Firepaw?!" Yellowfang yowled.

The two cats bristled. "I better go. Thanks for the poultice." he mewed. "Wait! What were you going to tell me?" Spottedleaf mewed. Firepaw looked into her amber eyes. "I...uh...I'll tell you another time, okay?" Firepaw mewed before padding out.

Spottedleaf stared at him. "What was he going to tell me?" she thought. She shrugged and started sorting her herbs again.

Spottedleaf was asleep in her den. She woke up in a dream. She was in Starclan.

"Why am I here again? I'm not even at the Moonstone." Spottedleaf thought.

"You don't need to go to the Moonstone to visit Starclan. We can visit you in your dreams." said a recognizable voice.

Spottedleaf turned around and saw Goosefeather. "Uh, hi." she mewed.

Goosefeather's face was hard. "You're doing it again." he mewed.

Spottedleaf tilted her head. "Doing what again?" she mewed.

"You're falling in love again. You're falling in love with that

Firepaw. You know you can't have a mate, Spottedleaf. Especially if he's an apprentice." Goosefeather growled.

"What? That's ridiculous! I'm not in love with Firepaw!" Spottedleaf lied, her cheeks feeling hot.

Goosefeather squinted his eyes. "I've seen the way you look at him. I've seen the way you touch him. I know what you think about him. You have to stop. Your duties are more important than your love interests." Goosefeather hissed.

"You don't understand what it's like to fall in love with someone, Goosefeather! You've never fallen in love! I can't just stop loving him!" Spottedleaf growled.

Goosefeather sighed. "That's just it. You'll never stop loving him. And by the way, Redtail's death isn't your punishment. The punishment hasn't happened yet. But it will soon." Goosefeather mewed. He started to walk away.

"Hey! Come back! I'm not done with you yet!" Spottedleaf yowled.

"Spottedleaf...Spottedleaf..." a voice echoed in her dream. She twirled around. "Who's there?!" she demanded.

"Spottedleaf!"

She woke up and saw Firepaw. "Are you okay? You were murmuring in your sleep." he mewed.

Spottedleaf sat up slowly. "Yeah. Just a dream." she mewed.

Firepaw gave her a concerned look, but then smiled. "Wanna eat some prey with me?" he mewed.

Spottedleaf stared at him. "You can't stop loving him. It doesn't matter what Goosefeather says. He's just a crazy old Starclan cat." she thought to herself. She smiled. "Sure. I'd love to." she mewed.

Firepaw smiled back as they both padded out of the den.

Chapter 16

Spottedleaf passed by Firepaw and ran her tail under his chin as she passed by, purring.
Spottedleaf padded to the nursery and saw Frostfur with her kits. "Do you need anything, Frostfur?" Spottedleaf mewed. Frostfur nodded, still looking at her kits. "My milk is starting to run low. Do you have some sort of herb that can increase it?" Frostfur mewed. "Of course! I'll go get the herbs for you." Spottedleaf mewed. Frostfur looked up at her gratefully, though her eyes did contain grief. Spottedleaf understood why. A few moons ago, her mate Lionheart died from a Shadowclan battle.
"I'm sorry that you still grieve." Spottedleaf mewed. Frostfur sighed. "I just wished Lionheart could see them grow." Frostfur mewed. "He is." Spottedleaf mewed. Frostfur stared at her, then blinked slowly at her in gratitude.

"I'll go get the needed herbs." Spottedleaf mewed. "Okay. You do that while I get some prey. I'm starving." Frostfur mewed as she padded out of the nursery. Her kits squealed in protest. "It's alright kits, I'll only take a moment." Frostfur mewed gently as she padded to the fresh kill pile.

Spottedleaf padded into her den and got borage leaves that will increase Frostfur's milk. She padded to the nursery, only to find the kits missing. She dropped her herbs.

Spottedleaf looked around the nursery and saw a brown figure with the kits. "Clawface." Spottedleaf thought. "Put the kits down, Clawface." Spottedleaf growled. "And disobey my leader's orders? I don't think so." Clawface hissed.

Spottedleaf unsheathed her claws. Clawface purred as if laughing. "You think this is wise? Wanting to fight me for the kits?" Clawface mewed. Spottedleaf's only answer was when she charged at him, but Clawface avoided her claws.

Spottedleaf turned around to face him, but Clawface quickly pinned her down. He put his claw on Spottedleaf's throat and clawed it. Spottedleaf's yowl was barely audible. Clawface purred with amusement and ran away with the kits.

Spottedleaf fought for air. "Now me and Firepaw will never be

mates now!" Spottedleaf thought. She rolled her head onto one side. She felt herself fall into darkness, and then light.

Chapter 17

Spottedleaf's spirit opened her eyes. She saw the blinding light of the ground, sky and trees. "I'm in Starclan. I'm...dead..." Spottedleaf thought.

"I thought you wouldn't be in Starclan." mewed a familiar voice. Spottedleaf spun around and saw Goosefeather. "Oh. Great. It's you." Spottedleaf hissed with annoyance.

Goosefeather dipped his head. "So. My punishment was my death, huh?" Spottedleaf growled bitterly.

"No. But it will come soon." Goosefeather mewed.

Spottedleaf stared at him. "How much more do I have to lose before I get my punishment? I have already lost my Firepaw!" Spottedleaf growled.

"You haven't. Not yet." Goosefeather mewed.

"What do you mean not yet?!"

"You'll see."

Spottedleaf glared at the old tom in anger, resisting the urge to claw off his pelt.

Goosefeather walked away. Spottedleaf fell to the ground. "I'm alone in Starclan. I'm so sorry, my dear Firepaw." Spottedleaf whispered.

Spottedleaf was walking around in Starclan. Some cats stared at her with hostility as she passed by. Their stares felt as though they were burning flames onto her pelt.

She ignored them as she went to the pool. She dived in it and swam down to Thunderclan.

Spottedleaf looked around, wondering where Fireheart was. She wanted to tell him how proud she is that he's a warrior.

Spottedleaf saw the familiar orange pelt as she started to pad to him, but beside him was Sandstorm, who was pressing against him.

Spottedleaf stared at them in shock. "But...I thought...I was the one for Fireheart..." Spottedleaf thought bitterly with jealousy.

Suddenly, she felt something tug her pelt. She looked over her shoulder and saw no one, but something pulled her up in the

sky. Spottedleaf tried to fight back, but she was pulled back into Starclan.

Spottedleaf stood above the pool, staring at it. She felt soft fur brush against hers. "That's your punishment." Spottedleaf heard Goosefeather mew.

"But...I thought he loved me..." Spottedleaf choked. "He did. He was going to tell you, but you got killed, and he grieved for you. Sandstorm started to comfort him this past moon and Fireheart soon realized that his heart lay in Sandstorm's paws." he mewed.

"But why her?! I was going to be the one!" Spottedleaf yowled. Goosefeather said nothing more as he walked away.

Spottedleaf fell to the ground, beginning to sob, clenching her claws in the white soil. "Sandstorm will pay for this! I will make her suffer as well as her heirs! Anything to make Fireheart believe I was the one!" Spottedleaf thought, tears rolling down her amber eyes as they sparkled from the tears.

Chapter 18

Spottedleaf was licking her paws until they sparkled with the white trees and floor. She looked into the pool and saw Fireheart and Sandstorm press against each other, staring at Bluestar's body in despair.
Spottedleaf squinted at the two mates. Spottedleaf was happy that Fireheart was going to be leader, but she probably won't be giving him a life.
At the corner of her eye, she saw Goosefeather pad up to Spottedleaf. "This annoying furrball again?" she thought, rolling her eyes.
Goosefeather sat beside her. "Painful, isn't it? It's too bad you had to kill Thistleclaw and become a medicine cat. You might still be alive. You might even be mates to Fireheart." Goosefeather mewed.
Spottedleaf didn't turn to look at him, though her eyes were surprised. "Does he pity me?" she thought. She shook that thought away. Of course he doesn't pity her! He punished her because she killed two toms that were breaking the warrior code!
"What do you want, mange-pelt?" Spottedleaf growled.
Goosefeather was silent for a moment, as if he was reluctant to say what he needed to tell her.
"Spit it out." she hissed, still not turning to him.
Goosefeather sighed. "You're going to be one of the cats to give Fireheart his nine lives." Goosefeather mewed. He winced at the end, like he regretted saying that.
Finally, Spottedleaf turned her head to face him, surprise and happiness in her amber eyes.
"Really?" she mewed. "Do you think I would lie, mousebrain? Of course you're going to give him one of his nine lives! You're one of the cats that played and important part of his life." Goosefeather growled.
Spottedleaf felt overjoyed. She looked back down to Fireheart. A warm glow spread through her body.
"Uh, you're welcome for telling you?" Goosefeather mewed.
Immediately, the warm glow faded. "As if I would thank you for ruining my life." she growled as she walked away.

Starclan cats waited, watching the pool as Fireheart and Cinderpelt walked to the Moonstone.
Excitement tingled under Spottedleaf's paws. She was so honoured and happy to give a life to the new leader and the love of her life.
Finally, after what seemed forever, Fireheart and Cinderpelt were walking down the Mothermouth. They reached the Moonstone. The two cats said something to each other before Fireheart touched his nose to the stone and fell asleep.
The Starclan cats turned around. After a few moments, Fireheart appeared. He looked around, confused, until he saw the Starclan cats. The nine cats, including Spottedleaf, walked forward.
"Welcome to Starclan." Bluestar mewed, eyes filled with pride as she looked at her apprentice.
"It's great to be here. It's great to see all of you again." Fireheart purred. The nine cats dipped their heads.
Lionheart was first to walk up to Fireheart.
"Oh, Lionheart, I'm so sorry we didn't arrive on time to save you." Fireheart mewed, voice filled with regret.
"Do not blame yourself, my friend. It was my time to go. And besides, this is the night of your nine lives. Don't rot it with regret." Lionheart mewed gently.
Lionheart touched his nose to Fireheart's head. "With this life, I give you courage." he mewed.
Suddenly, Fireheart flinched, he groaned a little. Spottedleaf paws trembled, but she stayed where she was.
"Don't worry, my love. The pain will be over soon." she thought.
Fireheart gasped as Lionheart pulled away. Green eyes and green eyes met for a moment.
"Please use my life well." Lionheart mewed. Fireheart nodded. "I will." he mewed. Lionheart purred, eyes filled with warmth as the golden tom padded away.
Next was Redtail as he pad up to Fireheart. At first, Fireheart looked confused for a moment, then suddenly lit up. "You're Redtail, aren't you?" he mewed.
"Yep! And I want to say thank you. You made me feel free since you spoke the truth of Tigerstar." Redtail purred.
Redtail touched his head to Fireheart's head. "With this life, I give you justice." he mewed.
Again, Fireheart flinched, eyes dark with pain. Spottedleaf looked

away. She couldn't bear to see him in pain.
Finally, Fireheart's groaning stopped as Redtail pulled away and Fireheart started panting. "Sorry. Lives can be painful to gain. But it will be over soon." he purred. Redtail pranced away. Spottedleaf purred. Redtail lost non of his energy in Starclan. Pride swelled inside Spottedleaf for her brother.
Silverstream was next as she pad up to Fireheart. "I'm sorry you had to leave so soon. You could have watched your kits with Graystripe and love and care for them." Fireheart mewed, voice filled with despair.
"I do watch over them. All of them. I still love Graystripe with all my heart. And I'm very happy with his choices." Silverstream purred.
She touched Fireheart's head with her nose. "With this life, I give you loyalty to know what's right." she mewed.
This time, Fireheart didn't flinched and instead, his eyes closed and purring. Spottedleaf felt relief rush through her pelt. "It must be a pleasant life then." she thought.
Silverstream pulled away. She looked into his eyes for a moment. "Tell Graystripe I love him and our kits." Silverstream mewed.
Fireheart licked her head. "Of course." he mewed. Silverstream purred with affection as she padded back.
Runningwind was next as the light brown tabby padded to Fireheart.
"I'm-" Fireheart started to say. But Runningwind raised his tail for him to be silent before he could finish his sentence.
"No need to apologize. My death wasn't you're fault." he purred. "With this life, I give you energy." he mewed.
Again, Fireheart didn't flinch as his eyes were filled with excitement and purring happily. Spottedleaf purred with amusement.
Runningwind pulled away. "Say hi to Mousefur for me." he purred as he walked away.
Next was Brindleface as she padded up to him. "Thank you for leaving me to care for Cloudtail. I'm going to miss him..." Brindleface mewed, her eyes filled sorrow for a moment.
"With this life, I give you protection." she mewed.
Apparently, this life wasn't gentle as Fireheart flinched and groaned again. He stopped as Brindleface pulled away. She padded back.
Swiftpaw took her place. "I'm sorry." Fireheart mewed.
"No, don't be. My death wasn't anyone's fault but mine. I was

foolish. I thought that if I killed the dogs, then I could prove to Bluestar that I could be a warrior. But I was wrong. It cost my life and it almost got Lostface killed. It's my fault she had that injury. Now I have to live on with that guilt..." Swiftpaw mewed, eyes full of regret and sorrow.
"Swiftpaw..." Fireheart mewed. Swiftpaw shook himself. "No, it's fine. This is your night. I shouldn't be saying stuff like that to spoil it for you." Swiftpaw mewed, smiling. He touched his nose to his head.
"With this life, I give you mentoring. Use it well, especially with Bramblepaw." he mewed.
Fireheart flinched and winced in pain again. He panted as Swiftpaw pulled away. "Tell Lostface I'm sorry." he mewed gently as he walked away.
Yellowfang was next as she pad up to Fireheart. Fireheart's eyes were filled with sorrow and affection as soon as she pad up to him. "Oh, Yellowfang, I'm so sorry you had to be left behind in that fire." he mewed. "It's fine, mousebrain! Honestly, are you going to apologize to every cat here?" Yellowfang snapped though she was purring and her eyes were filled with humour.
Fireheart was purring, too. "I missed your humour, Yellowfang." he purred. "I would be surprised if you didn't." Yellowfang purred. She touched her nose to his head. "With this life, I give you compassion." she mewed.
Fireheart closed his eyes, though Spottedleaf saw his claws flex with pain. Spottedleaf purred. Yellowfang was like a mother to Fireheart, so of course he would be calm gaining her life.
Yellowfang pulled away. "You're very brave, Fireheart. Say hi to Cinderpelt for me and that she better stop be thinking about the past!" Yellowfang purred. Fireheart purred with amusement as Yellowfang walked away.
"I'm next." Spottedleaf realized. Heart pounding, she started padding to Fireheart. His eyes were filled with love and affection as soon as he saw her.
"Spottedleaf..." he whispered. Spottedleaf looked into his eyes. "He's so handsome." she thought. She pressed her muzzle to his.
"With this life, I give you love." Spottedleaf mewed. She concentrated on passing on her warmth and love to him as he started purring.
She had to pull away, but she looked into Fireheart's green eyes.

"Please don't be upset with me for choosing Sandstorm." he mewed.
Spottedleaf purred with love and affection as she licked his cheek. "I wouldn't be upset with you, my love." she purred. She walked away, though her heart was screaming her to turn back to him and press against him.
The last cat was Bluestar as she padded to Fireheart.
"Bluestar." he mewed, his mew filled with happiness. Bluestar started purring.
"My warrior, my apprentice, my deputy. Welcome. I knew you be Thunderclan leader one day. And you know, you've always felt like a son to me." Bluestar purred.
"You and Yellowfang were like mothers to me." Fireheart mewed.
Bluestar laughed a little. "Of course." she purred. She touched her nose to his muzzle.
"With this life, I give you nobility with certainty and faith." Bluestar mewed.
Fireheart flinched. Spottedleaf saw his claws clenching the ground in absolute pain. Spottedleaf could understand why this was the last life, because Fireheart started yowling in pain.
Fireheart gasped and panted. "I know it was painful. Trust me, I know." Bluestar mewed, amusement in her mew for a moment. "I now give you your new name, Firestar. You have recieved your nine lives. Use them all well in defending and leading your Clan. I'm proud of you, Firestar." Bluestar purred.
"Firestar! Firestar!" the Starclan cats started chanting. Bluestar, Yellowfang, and Spottedleaf were the loudest. Firestar looked around the nine cats, eyes filled with love and affection.
Suddenly, the clearing went dark and a pile of bones appeared behind Firestar. Spottedleaf looked around in alarm. "Are they really showing the vision to Firestar?" Spottedleaf thought.
Spottedleaf remembered before the ceremony that the Starclan cats talked about showing a sign to Firestar, but Spottedleaf didn't know they were sending this!
"Something terrible will happen, Firestar. Four will become two. Lion and tiger will meet in battle, and blood will run through the forest and Clans." Bluestar mewed urgently to Firestar.
Firestar's eyes were wide with alarm as he faded away. Spottedleaf looked down at the pool and saw him wake up.
Spottedleaf started growling. "Who sent the sign?!" she yowled.
"I did."

She turned around and saw Goosefeather. "Of course he did it!" Spottedleaf thought.
"Why did you send the sign?!" Spottedleaf growled.
"He had to see it sooner or later. His ceremony was a perfect opportunity." Goosefeather mewed.
"A perfect opportunity for what? To get him scared? To make him alarmed? This night was his and you ruined it with that sign! You put more burdens on him! You should have let me send him the sign tomorrow night!" Spottedleaf growled.
"There's no time to waste. A battle is coming. And we want the barrier between living and dead still standing, right?" Goosefeather mewed, raising his eyebrows at the last part.
Spottedleaf bristled. She had recently visited Firestar in his dreams, but she wasn't really aware of there being a boundary.
"What does the boundary do?" Spottedleaf mewed. "It makes sure that the dead keep living the way we do without disturbing the living and probably causing a war between living and dead." Goosefeather mewed.
Spottedleaf looked away from him and into the pool. "What if it was broken?" she mewed. "Then the dead will go down to the living. The Dark Forest will likely cause trouble, which is why the barrier is there. It prevents the dead to harm the living." Goosefeather mewed.
Spottedleaf drank in the information. "A war, you say?" she mewed. He didn't reply. In the corner of her eye, he saw him walk away.
Spottedleaf looked over to the Thunderclan camp. She looked at Sandstorm. She was pacing.
Spottedleaf looked up. "A war between living and dead." she thought. She smirked and licked her lips. "I think I might have a plan to see Sandstorm suffer." she thought, purring.